

Application No.: 10/114,151
Reply to Office action dated March 2, 2005

Remarks/Arguments:

For 35 USC 103 Claim Rejections:

Claims 1, 3-10, and 12-14 have been regarded as obvious when compared to applicant's admitted prior art, AAPA, herinafter in view of Lynn et al. [US 4,096,364].

Regarding claim 1, applicant responds to the 03/02/2005 Office Action, page 3, paragraph 3, where it is said that Lynn et al. included a protuberance "in order to provide a pivot point for the armature/actuator." Column 3 of Lynn et al., first paragraph, similarly states the following: "Buttons 27 are pivotally positioned in the frame. Each of the buttons is made of plastics material such as ABS, Lexan (see FIGS. 5, 10, 11 and 12) and have a pin 27-1 which rotates in frame channels 21-4." The protuberance/pin of Lynn et al. provides a structure that closely resembles some known hinges that are commonly used to pivotally position doors in their frames or covers over their containers.

Applicant's protuberance does NOT provide a pivot point for the armature/actuator. If one of ordinary skill in the art would have included a protuberance on an armature/actuator in order to provide a pivot point, as suggested by the Office action, and applicant's disclosure does NOT use a protuberance as a pivot point, then the disclosure by Lynn et al. should not be used. Applicant's protuberance in no way provides a pivot point or any kind of bearing surface. (See paragraph 9, 11 and 12 of applicant's patent application for an understanding of how the protuberance provides a better tactile feedback by creating a gap between the magnetic coupler layer and the heel end of the armature.) Applicant's protuberance only reduces armature heel travel to eliminate double tactile in a magnetically

coupled pushbutton switch.

Regarding claims 3-4 and 12, applicant only agrees that stamping is obvious in light of what is disclosed by AAPA once there has been a determination that the armature itself should be modified at the applicant's suggested location of the protuberances. Applicant spent undue time and expense simplifying the claimed invention, and one of ordinary skill in the art would probably be required to do the same but for learning from applicant's disclosure. The tolerances within a magnetically coupled switch are very close compared to the thicknesses of materials and properties of magnets. Examples of failed efforts include affixing a thin layer of polyester between the heel of the armature and the magnetic coupler layer (to the armature, to the magnetic coupler layer, or both), bending the heel of the armature towards the magnetic coupler layer, redesigning the crown of the armature to interfere with the aperture, applying a thick layer of paint to the top of the heel of the armature, and many other even less successful attempts. Stamping the protuberances was not obvious because the armature flatness was already threatened by stamping the crown, and stamping protuberances seemed like a step in the wrong direction. Additionally, stamped protuberances were thought to have the potential to wear the magnetic coupler layer and break off small pieces of magnet that could interfere with switch operation, but the reduced magnetic attraction caused by the protuberances relieves this concern.

Regarding claims 5 and 10 applicant has not found any prior art that discloses or teaches a plurality of symmetrical protuberances, and Lynn et al. only shows a single protuberance/pin that is used for providing a pivot point. Applicant's protuberance provides a gap between a magnetic coupler layer and the heel end of an armature, NOT a pivot point.

Regarding claims 7-9, 13 and 14, these are all further limitations upon independent claims, and these dependent claims are new in combination with the protuberances

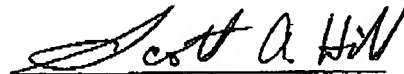
of the present invention.

Please note that the claim listing in the Office action summary does not agree with the detailed action. The detailed action is assumed to be correct because it addresses most claims individually.

Claims 1-20 remain in this application. Claims 2, 11 and 16-18 have been withdrawn as the result of an earlier restriction requirement. Applicant retains the right to present claims 2, 11 and 16-18 in a divisional application.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,



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